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BRITISH SPIES;

FORMER DIPLOMAT PLEADS GUILTY TO PASSING SECRETS; DETAILS
LONDON (AP) - RHONA JANET RITCHIE, A FORMER SECOND SECRETARY AT THE
BRITISH EMBASSY IN TEL AVIV, PLEADED GUILTY TODAY TO PASSING BRITISH
GOVERNMENT SECRETS TO HER LOVER, AN EGYPTIAN EMBASSY OFFICIAL.
MISS RITCHIE, 30, ADMITTED TO ONE COUNT OF WRONGFULLY COMMUNICATING
INFORMATION TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON.

IT WAS THE SECOND PROSECUTION UNDER BRITAIN'S OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT
IN THREE WEEKS. ON NOV. 10, GEOFFREY PRIME, A FORMER TRANSLATOR AT THE
TOP-SECRET GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS HEADQUARTERS IN CHELTENHAM,
PLEADED GUILTY TO CHARGES OF PASSING SECRETS TO THE SOVIET UNION AND
WAS SENTENCED TO 35 YEARS IN PRISON.

BRITISH NEWSPAPERS HEADLINED REPORTS TODAY OF ANOTHER SPY CASE IN
WHICH BRITISH MILITARY SECRETS MAY HAVE BEEN PASSED BY A BRITISH ARMY
SPY RING THROUGH THE SOVIET EMBASSY TO ARGENTINA, BRITAIN'S FOE IN
LAST SPRING'S FALKLAND ISLANDS CONFLICT.

AT A HEARING IN LONDON'S OLD BAILEY CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT, ATTORNEY
GENERAL SIR MICHAEL HAYERS SAID THAT BETWEEN NOVEMBER OF LAST YEAR
AND FEBRUARY OF THIS YEAR, MISS RITCHIE DISCLOSED THE CONTENTS OF FIVE
SECRET DIPLOMATIC TELEGRAMS TO REFRAT EL-ANSARY, HER COUNTERPART AT
THE EGYPTIAN EMBASSY.

SINCE EGYPT HAS FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH BRITAIN, "THE DAMAGE TO OUR
COUNTRY'S INTERESTS WAS NOT IN THE EVENT GREAT," HAYERS SAID.
HE DESCRIBED MISS RITCHIE'S ACTIONS AS "MORE FOOLISH THAN WICKED."
ACCORDING TO HAYERS, FOUR OF THE TELEGRAMS - MARKED "CONFIDENTIAL"
- WERE FROM THEN-BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY LORD CARRINGTON TO
THEN-SECRETARY OF STATE ALEXANDER M. HAIG JR. AND ISRAELI OFFICIALS
SAYING BRITAIN WOULD TAKE PART IN A MULTINATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCE
IN THE SINAI. THEIR CONTENTS, HAYERS SAID, WOULD EVENTUALLY HAVE
BECOME KNOWN.

BUT A FIFTH, WHICH HAYERS SAID WAS THE "MOST SENSITIVE," GAVE
CARRINGTON'S VIEWS ON VARIOUS MIDDLE EAST QUESTIONS. ITS CONTENTS WERE
"KNOWN TO WASHINGTON BUT OBVIOUSLY BETTER NOT KNOWN TO OTHERS," THE
PROSECUTOR SAID.